

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-10 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00
DODE-00 DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 SS-15
NSC-05 /061 W
-----127642 121140Z /12

P R 121111Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5844
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 0437

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAIR, NI
SUBJECT: CIVIL AIR AGREEMENT

REF: (A) STATE 1831, (B) 76 BEIRUT 6375

1. FMG PAPERWORK ON BILATERAL CIVIL AIR AGREEMENT APPEARS TO BE GRINDING SLOWLY THROUGH STICKY OFFICIAL BUREAUCRACY. IN JANUARY 10 MEETING WITH EMBOFF, MIN CIV AIR PRINCIPAL SECRETARY ADEGBENRO STATE(THAT QUOTE ORIGINALLY, AGREEMENT WAS TO RECEIVE SPECIAL SPEEDY TREATMENT TO BE READY FOR CARTER NOVEMBER VISIT. WITH TRIP POSTPONED, AGREEMENT WILL RECEIVE NORMAL HANDLING UNQUOTE. IN ANSWER TO EMBOFF'S QUESTION AS TO WHEN WE COULD EXPECT AGREE-
MENT TO BE COMPLETED, ADEGBENRO REPLIED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW EXACTLY BUT WOULD INFORM US AS SOON AS HE KNEW MORE.

2. ADEGBENRO WENT ON TO STATE THAT THE AGREEMENT GIVEN THE AMERICANS WENT BEYOND WHAT ANY OTHER NATION HAD GOTTEN FROM NIGERIA, AND THAT THE QUOTE CONCESSIONS TO THE U.S. UNQUOTE WERE DUE LARGELY TO THE THEN PENINDG CARTER VISIT. HE FURTHER
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SAID QUOTE NOW EVERY SMALL COUNTRY COMES IN AND ASKS FOR MULTIPLE DESIGNATION UNQUOTE. (THIS IS PROBABLY A REFERENCE TO LEBANON AS REPORTED REFTEL B.)

3. WHEN EMBOFF POINTED OUT THAT NIGERIA AIRWAYS BLOCK SPACE LEASING ARRANGEMENT ENDS JANUARY 15 AND THAT AIRWAYS DOES NOT PLAN TO BEGIN DIRECT FLIGHTS TO NEW YORK UNTIL APRIL,

ADEGBENRO ANSWERED QUOTE IF YOU DON'T ALLOW NIGERIA AIRWAYS
TO OPERATE WE WILL SACK YOU AS WE DID THE LEBANESE UNQUOTE.

4. COMMENT: KNOWING ADEGBENRO'S REPUTATION AS AN ABRASIVE
AND CANTANKEROUS OFFICIAL, WE ARE NOT WORRIED BY THE
BRUSQUENESS OF HIS WORDS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE THREAT PUT FOR-
WARD IN PARA 3 IS IRRELEVANT SINCE NIGERIA AIRWAYS CAN REPEAT
CAN FLY TO NEW YORK UNDER OPERATING PERMIT WITHOUT BILATERAL
AGREEMENT. WE ARE IN EFFECT ALLOWING THE AIRLINE TO
OPERATE.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LAGOS00437
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780018-0205
Format: TEL
From: LAGOS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780172/aaaacjab.tel
Line Count: 73
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ac368be4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 1831, 76 BEIRUT 6375
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3788920
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CIVIL AIR AGREEMENT
TAGS: EAIR, NI
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ac368be4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014